

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

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INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, MC
SUBJECT: OPENING OF REFUGEE CENTER IN MACAU

REF: (A) HONG KONG 8635, (B) HONG KONG 9260

1. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE, CHRIS CARPENTER, CALLED CONGEN TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM UNHCR AREA OFFICER SAMPATKAMAR TO ACCEPT MACAU'S OFFER FOR REFUGEE CENTER (REPORTED REF A) AND TO INITIATE ACTION TO TRANSFER REFUGEES FROM HONG KONG TO MACAU. CARPENTER SAID THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE MACAU PROPOSAL, HE WAS PREPARED TO TRANSFER 400 REFUGEES AT THIS TIME. CONGENOFF ADVISED CARPENTER THAT DURING LOWMAN VISIT TO MACAU EARLIER THIS MONTH THERE WERE INDICATIONS THAT MACAU WOULD ACCEPT 600 REFUGEES. CARPENTER PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THIS POSSIBILITY.

2. WE INFORMED CARPENTER THAT THERE WERE 139 REFUGEES IN HONG KONG PRESENTLY CLASSIFIED IN USG CATEGORY 1, 2. AND 3 WHICH WE WERE PREPARED TO PROPOSE FOR TRANSFER
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TO MACAU WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. THESE REFUGEES HAD BEEN ADMINISTRATIVELY SCREENED BY INS AND WE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE THEM WITH MEDICAL CLEARANCES BY JULY 24. WE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SINCE USG WAS NOT ABLE TO ASSIGN NUMBERS TO THESE REFUGEES AT THIS TIME, UNHCR WOULD HAVE TO SECURE HKG GUARANTEES FOR THESE REFUGEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH HKG'S AGREEMENT WITH

LOWMAN (REF B).

3. CONGEN ALSO OFFERED TO PREPARE GROUP OF 122 IN CATEGORY 4 WHO COULD BE READY FOR TRANSFER BY JULY 26. CARPENTER EXPRESSED RELUCTANCE TO ACCEPT ANY CATEGORY 4 FOR REFUGEES FOR MACAU SINCE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES THE USG WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO ISSUE NUMBERS FOR CATEGORY 4 WITHIN THE 6-MONTH HOLDING PERIOD SUGGESTED BY MACAU.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: BECAUSE OF THE STOPPAGE OF UNHCR REFUGEE PROCESSING BETWEEN THE TIME ICEM GAVE UP THE RESPONSIBILITY AND UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER ARRIVED IN HONG KONG, A CONSIDERABLE BACKLOG DEVELOPED AND WE EXPECT TO HAVE ADDITIONAL CATEGORY 1, 2 AND 3 CASES TO PRESENT TO UNHCR FOR TRANSFER TO MACAU BY THE END OF THE MONTH. WE BELIEVE THAT WITH THE SUPPORT OF HKG AND THE CONCURRENCE OF THE MACAU AUTHORITIES, THAT CONGEN MIGHT BE ABLE TO PERSUADE CARPENTER TO TRANSFER CATEGORY 4 REFUGEES TO MACAU IF THE DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THIS MOVE TO BE ADVISABLE. IT MAY, HOWEVER, BE MORE IN THE INTEREST OF THE PROGRAM FOR THE PRESENT TO SEND REFUGEES TO MACAU WHO ARE NOT EXPECTED TO STAY THERE FOR TOO LONG A PERIOD. THE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE ON THIS POINT IS REQUESTED.

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5. AN ADDITIONAL 147 REFUGEES ARRIVED IN HONG KONG DURING JULY 15-17. ON JULY 15 U.S. NAVY NUCLEAR SUBMARINE USS FLASHER ARRIVED WITH 22 REFUGEES EMBARKED, FOLLOWED BY 2 VIETNAMESE JUNKS CARRYING 6 AND 21 REFUGEES RESPECTIVELY. ON JULY 17 U.S. MERCHANT SHIP GATEWAY CITY ARRIVED WITH 51 REFUGEES FOLLOWED BY JAPANESE VESSEL SANGAMI MARU WITH 47 REFUGEES. ALL REFUGEES WERE ADMITTED FOR TEMPORARY STAY UNDER UNHCR AUSPICES.
SHOESMITH

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